



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh Announces Distribution of Checks to Maryland Consumers Harmed by Computer Chip Price-Fixing Conspiracy

Baltimore, MD (July 13, 2016) - Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today announced that his Office, together with 32 other state attorneys general, began the distribution of checks ranging in amounts of \$25.00 to \$200.00 as part of a 2010 \$300 million nationwide settlement with seven worldwide manufacturers of Dynamic Random Access Memory computer chips (DRAM). The settlement resolved allegations that the companies devised an elaborate scheme to raise prices on their products. DRAM is a type of computer chip used in all personal computers, servers, workstations and many other electronic devices.

"We usually warn consumers about receiving phony checks, but today, we want consumers to know that these letters are legitimate," said Attorney General Frosh. "For those consumers who submitted claims in 2014, a letter will be mailed with a check as part of the DRAM settlement. The check is real."

The settlement money is restitution for consumers who paid more for computers and other electronic devices because of the price-fixing scheme. Checks were mailed to Maryland residents who submitted claims forms by August 1, 2014. A sample of the letter sent from the Office of Attorney General to consumers can be found [here](#). The amount of each check is based on the number of computers purchased between 1999 and 2002.

The DRAM manufacturers settling include the American companies Micron Technology, Inc. and NEC Electronics America, Inc. as well as foreign companies Infineon Technologies, Hynix Semiconductor, Elpida Memory, Inc., Samsung and Mosel-Vitelec Corp. The States' investigation revealed that from 1998 to 2002 these companies exchanged confidential information and agreed to quote inflated prices on DRAM to their customers, which included computer manufacturers such as Dell, IBM, and Hewlett-Packard. The computer manufacturers unknowingly passed on the inflated prices to consumers.

The settlement and these payments resolve the lawsuit which was first filed by the Attorney General's Office in 2007.